

By Representative Gannon

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act for the relief of Laura D. Strazza;
3 providing an appropriation to compensate her
4 for injuries sustained as a result of the
5 negligence of the Department of Agriculture and
6 Consumer Services; providing an effective date.

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8 WHEREAS, on April 25, 1996, Laura D. Strazza was riding
9 as a passenger in a motor vehicle on U.S. 1 in Juno Beach,
10 Palm Beach County, and

11 WHEREAS, an employee of the Department of Agriculture
12 and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry, was operating, on
13 and next to that highway, a large transport truck that
14 collided with the motor vehicle in which Laura D. Strazza was
15 a passenger, and

16 WHEREAS, as a consequence of this motor-vehicle crash,
17 Laura D. Strazza sustained multiple grievous injuries such
18 that she has been unable to work, has undergone surgical
19 procedures, and needs to undergo future surgical procedures,
20 and

21 WHEREAS, a legal action was brought by Laura Strazza, a
22 single woman, against the Department of Agriculture and
23 Consumer Services, and

24 WHEREAS, on July 13, 1999, a jury rendered a verdict in
25 favor of Laura D. Strazza, finding that the Department of
26 Agriculture and Consumer Services was partly negligent in
27 causing a motor-vehicle crash between the vehicle in which Ms.
28 Strazza was riding as a passenger and the department's
29 transport truck, and

30 WHEREAS, the jury rendered damages in the amount of
31 \$1,464,000, and, after reduction for collateral sources and

1 comparative negligence of the driver of the vehicle in which
2 Ms. Strazza was riding, a Final Judgment in the amount of
3 \$944,829 and a Cost Judgment in the amount of \$32,490.62, both
4 bearing interest at the statutory rate of 10 percent per year,
5 were entered against the Department of Agriculture and
6 Consumer Services, and

7 WHEREAS, after the Department of Agriculture and
8 Consumer Services pays Laura Strazza \$100,000, the maximum
9 amount allowable under section 768.28, Florida Statutes, the
10 remainder owed under the judgment will be \$877,319.62, NOW,
11 THEREFORE,

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13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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15 Section 1. The facts stated in the preamble to this
16 act are found and declared to be true.

17 Section 2. The sum of \$877,319.62 is appropriated out
18 of funds in the State Treasury to the credit of the Department
19 of Agriculture and Consumer Services and not otherwise
20 appropriated to be paid to Laura D. Strazza as relief for
21 injuries and damages sustained. Such amount shall be paid in
22 addition to the \$100,000 payable pursuant to section 768.28,
23 Florida Statutes.

24 Section 3. The Comptroller is directed to draw a
25 warrant in favor of Laura D. Strazza in the sum of \$877,319.62
26 upon funds in the State Treasury to the credit of the
27 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the State
28 Treasurer is directed to pay the same out of such funds in the
29 State Treasury not otherwise appropriated.

30 Section 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
31 law.

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LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

Providing an appropriation for the relief of Laura D. Strazza for injuries and damages sustained as a result of the negligence of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.